

THE GREEN CROMBEC *SYLVIETTA VIRENS* IN KENYA Forbes-Watson (1971) and Britton (in press) both exclude the Green Crombec *Sylvietta virens* from the Kenya list, although there have been occasional unpublished sight records from the Kakamega Forest, and the bird is mentioned from that locality by Williams (1967). On 1 and 2 June 1980 we had extensive views of this species at two localities among dense forest at Kakamega, in the grid behind the Forester's house. Both birds were seen in mixed bird parties which afforded easy size comparison with such other species as Black-collared Apalis *Apalis pulchra* and Uganda Woodland Warbler *Phylloscopus budongoensis*.

The birds seen were clearly crombecks, with almost non-existent tail, plump appearance, and relatively slender bills. They were olive-brown above and greyish white below, becoming much whiter on the belly. There was no conspicuous white eye-stripe visible. This exists in the White-browed Crombec *S. leucophrys*, a common species of the North Nandi Forest and other montane areas but which, according to Zimmerman (1972) is only a rare visitor to Kakamega. The most diagnostic feature observed was the brownish-buff colouring on the face and throat, extending to the upper breast. On both occasions the birds were observed for several minutes at a range of less than 10 m.

The Green Crombec is a common forest bird in Uganda, not restricted to the westernmost forests, and is often seen in company with the same species as observed at Kakamega.

REFERENCES

BRITTON, P.L. (ed.) in press. *Birds of East Africa*. Nairobi: EANH.S.

ZIMMERMAN, D.A. 1972. The avifauna of the Kakamega Forest, western Kenya, including a bird population study. *Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History*. 149: 257-339.

J.D. Gerhart, Box 41081, Nairobi and R.O. Paxton, Columbia University, New York, NY 10027, U.S.A.

Scopus 4: 47, June 1980

Received 10 June 1980

HEUGLIN'S MASKED WEAVER *PLOCEUS HEUGLINI* NESTING IN BUSOGA, UGANDA On a recent trip to northern Busoga, Uganda, on 3 February 1980, the following observations were made on the nesting of Heuglin's Masked Weaver *Ploceus heuglini*.

Beside the road were the usual electricity power lines, supported at intervals by poles. On a stretch of about 11 km, approximately 33°E and 1°N, several Heuglin's Masked Weaver colonies were noted along the wires. The largest colony had 20 nests, and the smallest only one. In every case the nests were near to the supporting poles. Many nests were in the process of being built, varying from a few grass strands woven into a ring, to completed structures. The birds were very noisy and very actively building and displaying. No females were seen, and all the building was apparently being done by the males.

The nests were mostly very close together, typically with a group of three or four touching each other, followed by a gap of half a metre or so, then another cluster of nests, or a single nest. The nests were without spouts, and had an entrance hole at the bottom, slightly to one side. One was seen to have a 'tail' of grass woven from the top of the nest, sideways along the wire.

The colonies were mostly over semi-permanent swamp which had dried out during a recent drought. There were numerous thorn trees, and other apparently suitable nesting sites in the area. The species has been recorded in Teso District (Mann 1976), but apparently not before in Busoga.

Scopus 4: 47-48, June 1980

REFERENCE

MANN, C.F. 1976. The birds of Teso District, Uganda. *Journal of the East Africa Natural History Society and National Museum*. 156: 1-16.

Margaret Carswell, Department of Surgery, Box 7051, Kampala, Uganda

Received 28 March 1980

NOTICES

SUBSCRIPTION INCREASES FOR 1981

During the first four years of the life of *Scopus*, worldwide inflation has been running at a very high level. Throughout this period the subscription to *Scopus* has remained unchanged. It is with considerable regret that, with effect from January 1981, we shall be forced to increase the rates but we hope that subscribers will bear with us and continue to give the journal their support. With the increases we have simplified matters, to produce fewer rates as follows:

East African residents: KShs 75

Overseas, surface mail: Sterling £6.00 or US\$12.00

Overseas, air mail: Sterling £7.50 or US\$15.00

All rates are for four quarterly issues plus the annual bird report and the overseas rates apply to all countries other than Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania.

LATE APPEARANCE OF THE JUNE SCOPUS

The Editor apologizes for the late appearance of this issue, due mainly to the pressure of work with the forthcoming *Birds of East Africa*. He would like to thank Dr D.J. Pearson for a great deal of help with the editing of this and the September issue which, it is hoped, will be published on time. Work is also progressing on the East African Bird Report 1979.

EAST AFRICAN BIRD RINGING REPORT, 1977-80

Apologies are also due for the non-appearance of a ringing report since October 1977. Most of the data for the report are to hand and the writing of it will begin shortly. Those ringers who have not sent in their schedules for 1979/80 (or even earlier years) are urged to do so as soon as possible, to Box 24702, Nairobi.

BIRDS OF EAST AFRICA

This book will be published in the second half of August 1980, all enquiries to D.A. Turner, Box 48019, Nairobi. For those in, or passing through, Nairobi the book will be available from the Society's office in the National Museum and from leading booksellers.